

Weekly Newsletter: 4th July 2022

Reflection: 'Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature' (I Cor. 14:20)

By Joe Barnard

Modern people tend to think that more knowledge is always a good thing. We often speak as if knowledge is a saviour. The more data we can get, and the more mystery we can dispel, the better off everyone will be. Thus alongside glorifying knowledge, we also glorify curiosity. Case in point, we encourage any sign of curiosity in children regardless of what the object of their interest might be. If we can get them to read books, who cares *what* they are reading. Witches and warlocks are subjects for self-improvement so long as kids are using books to learn about them.

Long ago, people felt differently about knowledge and curiosity. In the same way that food is good and necessary for the health of the body, and yet can be abused, philosophers and theologians recognised that knowledge, though good and necessary for the health of the mind, is also subject to abuse. For both body and mind, self-control was needed. Not every kind of knowledge – or degree of knowledge – was considered to be of benefit to the soul of a person. Traditionally, the Latin word *studiositas* referred to the virtue of a rightly ordered mind. The word referred to a mind that avoided the extremes of knowing too little and of knowing too much. For moral philosophers of a bygone age, Eve was the emblem of an unhealthy curiosity. Her desire to know about good and evil opened the door not only to her own personal misery, but also to ours.

If all of this sounds tedious and scholastic, it shouldn't. We live in an age where people congratulate themselves for being up-to-date on news regardless of the moral decency (or trivialness) of the topic being discussed. We also live in a culture where scratching every voyeuristic itch is considered just a normal night in from the TV. We also live in a society where knowledge is pursued regardless of what moral boundaries being transgressed so long as it falls under the category of scientific research. In such a context, old moral concepts like *studiositas* and *curiositas* (undisciplined curiosity) need to be dusted off and put back on the mantel of Christian discipleship. Knowledge in and of itself is not always a good thing. There are some things we have no right to know, and there are other things for which knowledge and corruption advance hand-in-hand.

This is part of the reason why Paul says in I Corinthians 14:20, 'Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.' On the one hand, Paul is telling us that it's okay to be ignorant of certain topics. Christians are none the better for understanding the mechanics of a deviant mind or the horrors of egregious acts of wickedness. There is many a YouTube video that we should never watch and many a headline that we

should never read. Though evil is a mesmerizing topic of inquiry, we need to beware of thinking that we can observe it without being contaminated by it.

On the other hand, although it's okay to be infants with regard to evil, Christians should not be infantile in thinking. Rather, we need minds like a razor that can cut through the nets of deceit and readily dissect the difference between truth and error. The important thing to see is that the way to grow in this capacity is not by studying what is evil, but by studying what is good. One does not use darkness to dispel darkness; one uses light. So it is with truth. The way to expose error is not to enrolling in the school of foolishness, but by renewing one's mind (Rom. 12:1) according to what is true, honourable, just, pure, and lovely (Phil. 4:8).

Most people today give at least a little thought to what goes into their body. They avoid smoking for the sake of their lungs; they watch their intakes of sugar and fats for the sake of general health; and they sprinkle a few vegetables into their diet in hopes that nutrition will stave off the encroachment of diseases. Are we equally careful with our minds? Have we ever thought about what it means – not just to avoid practicing evil – but to 'be infants in evil'? At a time where Christians are all too happy to fall into countless rabbit holes on YouTube and to chase the most inane of click-bait on social media, this is a question we ignore to our peril.

Summer Plans

Here are the plans for who will be taking our services in July:

- Sunday 10th – Hannu Sorsamo
- Sunday 17th and Equip – John Wilson. John currently heads up the digital evangelism ministry of the Free Church in the Highlands
- Sunday 24th – Mal Cooke, Christ Church Edinburgh (James Burnett is no longer available)
- Sunday 31st and Praise Night – Joe Barnard

Other information to note:

- Joe and the family will be on holiday from Monday 4th July until Monday 25th July. Please contact one of the elders or a member of the Pastoral Care Team (Maureen, Elaine, Alison, Alasdair or Liz) for any pastoral matters in Joe's absence.
- Summer Sunday Club will run for the duration of the school holidays (3rd July to 14th August). Thanks to all those who are helping lead this each week!
- Equip Sessions will carry on as normal on the first and third Sundays of the month.
- Home Groups will take a break for July and August.
- Liz will be on holiday from Friday 8th until Friday 22nd July. There will be no Newsletters on Monday 11th and 18th July. For any urgent admin matters, please contact Ernie Shippin (shippins@sky.com)

New Session Clerk – Andy Scott

We're so thankful to Ernie for all the work that he has done as Session Clerk. Last week at the Session meeting Andy Scott was appointed as the new Session Clerk. Please pray for Andy as he steps into this role and give thanks for all that Ernie has done for the church over so many years.

New Church Website

The new church website has gone live today, take a look at <https://holyroodevangelical.org/>

Sound Survey

We're so thankful to all that John, Mark and the AV team do each week to make our services run smoothly. They have asked for honest feedback (pun intended!) about the sound quality in the church and have created a short survey. Please complete the survey [here](#) if you haven't already and submit responses by this Wednesday (6th July).



Faith Mission Convention 2022

The Faith Mission Convention will take place this week from Monday 4th to Friday 8th July in the grounds of The Faith Mission Bible College in Gilmerton.

- Morning Bible Readings with David Cook at 10.30 am
- Evening Celebrations with Liam Goligher at 7.30 pm

No registration is required and everyone is welcome. A livestream of these meetings will be available at youtube.com/TheFaithMission. For details of seminars, and activities for children and youth, please go [here](#).

The Summer Appeal 2022

Summer Appeal 2022

Hannu & Hazel Sorsamo
Finland

Lorna Ferguson
Japan

James Stewart
Singapore

To contribute please use the bank details on holyroodevangelical.org (use reference 'Summer Appeal'), send a cheque to our treasurer, Nick Archer, or speak to your elder.

Thank you to all those who have given to the Summer Appeal. The total stands at just over £11,000.

The Appeal is open for the support of our missionaries (Lorna Ferguson, the Sorsamo family and James Stewart). Please transfer your gift to the church bank account with the reference 'Summer Appeal' or put it in the plate marked 'Summer Appeal'. If you have any questions, please speak to Nick Archer or your elder.

Laptops for Burkina Faso

By Jeremy Nash

There is a crying need for laptops in Burkina Faso. I am requesting your old laptop which would be greatly appreciated in Burkina Faso donated for free to Pastors in ministry but also those adding to their qualifications with additional courses and of course Bible College students. They are especially helpful so students can access resources through the internet to an online library rather than have to invest in more costly

books and commentaries. Laptops also facilitate writing their course notes or receiving them by USB from the lecturers.

If you have a laptop you no longer use your old laptop could really help someone in Burkina Faso. The essential is that the laptop has the power cable, a computer case is useful but not essential.

Each laptop goes to a local technician in the UK who not only wipes clean the hard drive but can produce an official headed letter stating that fact. He will also if needed obtain a new battery, install the operating system if one is not left on the laptop and make whatever other adjustments are necessary. In Burkina another technician will change the language to French and the keyboard as well. He will also install a couple of years of anti-virus or a free antivirus.

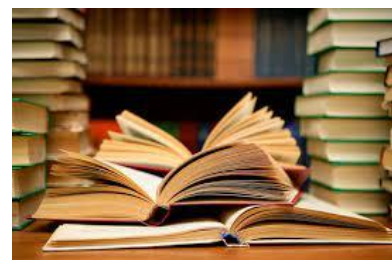
I then distribute these laptops for free to students, pastors following a course of further education, or bible college students. The need is great and the benefits to those receiving a laptop considerable so if you have a laptop please donate it, it will be well used and greatly appreciated.

For arranging collection of laptops please contact: jeremy.nash@missionafrica.org.uk or 07910 728140.

Summer Reading

If you're looking for books to read over the summer, please have a look in the church library. There are books on the trolley in the sanctuary as well as some on the shelves in the corridor downstairs.

There is no sign out book so please just return the book when you're finished. Happy reading!



Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting on Zoom at 7pm
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Hannu Sorsamo preaching. Please contact Liz by 12 noon on Thursday if you would like a socially distant seat.



www.holyroodevangelical.org

Incorporated as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Scottish Charity Number SCO44820